


# Taking Pride & Ownership in your Department

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# MOTIVATION



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# Employee Motivation

- There is no sure fire, quick fix, miracle formula to inspire, motivate and / or jump start morale, work attitudes and the overall productivity of your department.
- There are however; some steps that can be taken to eliminate these “demotivators”.

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Who is the “Glum” on  
your department?

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Pride, ownership and  
motivational tools for success...

- Communication
- Empowerment
- Recognition

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## Communication

- Communication is a critical component in employee motivation. Every employee must understand expectations. They also need to recognize how they fit into the grand picture or make up of the department.
- Informed employees tend to be the most motivated employees

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## Communication

- Define goals for both individuals and the department.
  - Goals must be well defined. No one should question what is expected of them. Make goals constantly visible either in writing or verbally. Publish goals in your fire stations, in SOP books, in your rigs and wherever personnel congregate.
  - Never stop sending clear and concise signals. This establishes your credibility as well.

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## Communication

- Listen intently.
  - Listen intently *and* be a receptive listener. Make time to interact with all department divisions, ranks and shifts.
  - Open your mind to suggestions and encourage input from all ranks.
  - Display a “can do & will do” positive attitude.
  - Enthusiasm is infectious.

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## Communication

- Every employee needs a sense of purpose.
  - Teach all of your personnel the purpose of their position and why they are important to the department.
  - Explain the significance of their position and how the entire department structure works to achieve common goals and missions.
  - Creating a sense of purpose promotes team work and instills a huge sense of pride.

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## Communication

- Communicate at all levels.
  - Communicate openly and freely.
  - Communicate frequently and positively.
  - Be honest.
  - Keep people informed
    - This seems so simple to accomplish but is probably the most over-looked.

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## Empowerment

- Employees have a need to be treated as valuable individuals.
- Trust your employees.
- Hold your employees accountable.

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“The best executive is the one who has the sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and the self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.”

*Theodore Roosevelt*

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## Empowerment

- Promote ownership.
  - Assign employees ownership of a task along with the responsibilities.
  - If you want to build a better machine, look at the mechanics that operate it.
  - Show them where the tool box is and stand back.
  - Advise your staff what you want and then step back and let them accomplish the task. Do not tell them how you want it done.
  - You are the coach, guide them, support them and encourage them. Keep them on the right track.

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## Empowerment

- Consider self monitoring.
  - Let departments set their own goals, their own rules and track their own productivity.
  - This self-monitoring system works on the principle to help employees and not to hinder them.
  - It will stimulate self-motivation.

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## Empowerment

- Empower your employees.
  - When you allow your employees to take action, it instills a sense of pride and ownership in their department.
  - Autonomy inspires self-motivation and reinforces self-worth.
  - Empowerment will allow department innovation to take shape.

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## Recognition

- Recognition makes your employees flourish.
  - We all have a desire for praise and achievement.
  - With recognition, your employees will feel appreciated.
  - When employees are appreciated, they are more likely to give more of themselves. (remember that empowerment thing).

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## Recognition

- Look beyond financial incentives.
  - It is important to build opportunities for achievement and recognition for their performance.
  - Using financial strategies such as raises or bonuses are usually short-lived and then anticipated for future recognition.
  - They may actually encourage employees to just squeak by to achieve laid out objectives and nothing more.

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## Recognition

- Personalized displays of appreciation, letters of gratitude, and department wide recognition for employee efforts weigh far more than money or promotions.
- When used frequently to reinforce productive behavior, these acknowledgements can result in outstanding performance each and every day.

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## Recognition

- Utilize spontaneous awards.
  - If a particular shift, station, engine company or crew has been a notable performer, reward them by providing a pizza dinner, cook breakfast for them in the station or just spend time with them to show your appreciation.
  - Create inexpensive but appreciated awards that keep your employees working their best even in extreme conditions.

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## Recognition

- Reward effort as well as outcome.
  - You must recognize those individuals that are trying and making progress even if a specific goal has not been met.
  - This recognition will encourage your employees to keep trying to achieve their goal.
  - A good learning experience is just as productive in the long run as achieving a specific goal.
  - Reward is an experience and not necessarily a prize.

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## Recognition

- Recognition does not have to be expensive.
  - A simple note works great.
  - It only takes a small amount of consistent reinforcement to maintain a behavior.
  - Once you get the process going, the productive behavior will become a productive work habit.

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## Summary

- Installing pride and ownership in your department as a motivational tool involves all of the factors that we have talked about.
- Demotivators will be dissolved by incorporating communication, empowerment and recognition within your department.
- Employee motivation is a long term commitment that must involve the entire organization.

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## Summary

- In order to be successful, there needs to be a close and constant examination of the department.
- Strategies for success should touch every employee from the top down.
- Creating a motivating work environment may seem like a huge commitment, but it is miniscule when you consider the benefits.

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## Summary

- Employee motivation is a proven method to build loyalty within your department and increases productivity of your personnel.
- Give your people the right tools, the right objectives and the right feedback and you will create a focused, innovative and outstanding department at every level, every day.
- Work will be fun for you and your staff.

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## In closing...

- Stay safe
- Stay motivated
- Remain positive and enthusiastic
- Listen well
- Empower employees
- Reward efforts
- Remain close to your department

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“Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with the results.”

*General George S. Patton*

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**Thank you!**

Questions?

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